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A SERMON

On the Deceaſe of

Mr. *Hanſerd Knollis*,

Miniſter of the Goſpel.

Preached at *Pinners-Hall*, Octob. 4. 1691.

By Tho. Harriſon.

Rev. XIV. 13.

And I heard a Voice from Heaven, ſaying unto me, Write, Bleſſed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, ſaith the Spirit, that they may reſt from their labours, and their Works do follow them.

LONDON:
Printed for *H. Barnard*, at the *Bible* in the *Poultrey*. 1694.

THE

Epiſtle to the Reader.

Courteous Reader,

I Do not Intitle the following Diſcourſe, Mr. Knollis's *Funeral Sermon, becauſe that was Preach't to his own Congregation by a Perſon far more eminent than my ſelf; But it was a Sermon which I voluntarily Preached upon the occaſion of his deceaſe, in that morning Lecture at* Pinners-Hall, *which was firſt erected by him; and wherein I have ground to hope he Labour'd with great ſucceſs, as well as acceptance. Soon after this Sermon came from the Pulpit, ſome were deſirous that I would ſend it to the Preſs; But I was not then willing to appear in ſo publick a manner upon the ſtage of the*

World. It is at last brought out of my study (wherein I design'd that it should have lain all my days with the rest of my unpolish't Papers) by the request and encouragement of some Friends, to publick view. I must expect the Common Lot of such mean Authors as my self, and which sometimes hath been the Portion of others, of a higher rank, to have both my Person and my Book Censured and Condemn'd, But however if God shall be Pleas'd to bless this little piece to the good of one Soul, I shall have no cause to repent its publication.

That thou may'st reap some spiritual advantage therefrom is the Prayer of,

Thine in the Lord

T. H.

A

Sermon

On the Deceaſe of

Mr. Hanſerd Knollis.

Zech. 1. v. 5. latter part.

And the Prophets, do they live for ever?

WHat frequent Conqueſts doth the King of *Terrours* gain over the Children of Men! Man goes continually to his long home, and the Mourners walk about the ſtreets. Men of all ages, ranks and degrees are

led away into Deaths gloomy Territories. One would think that if any could plead an exemption therefrom, it ſhould be they who are in the higheſt place and office in the Church of Chriſt; That if any could be diſcharged in this warfare, it ſhould be they whoſe work it is to ſubdue Rebellious ſinners unto Chriſt: That if any could be delivered from going down to the dark grave, it ſhould be they who are the lights of the World; That they, if any, ſhould eſcape the houſe of ſilence; who are to convey the Joyful ſound of the ever bleſſed Goſpel to the ears of men. But yet they muſt dye as well as others; for the Prophets, do they live for ever? Before I come to the words of my Text, I ſhall give you a brief accouut of the occaſion

ſion of them. When God had wrought out an unexpected and Miraculous deliverance, for the *Jews* from their *Babylonian Captivity*, and brought them again into their own Land, from whence they had been exiled ſeventy years; He was pleaſed to ſend the Prophet *Zechariah* (having not long before ſent *Haggai*) to them, to excite and ſtir them up to thoſe duties which were at that time Incumbent on them; In *v.* 3. of this *Ch.* the Prophet gives a ſummary account of that meſſage which he was Commanded to deliver from the Lord of the Prophets to them; *Thus ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, return unto me*; which Command is enforc't with a gracious Promiſe, that if they did ſo, God would return unto them. Our return to God in

a way of duty, is the moſt likely means to obtain his return to us in a way of grace and mercy.

And for as much as this People were very prone to Imitate the evil examples of their *Progenitours*, and to follow them, in thoſe crooked ways which they walked in; he *verſe* 4. Cautions them againſt an Imitation of their Forefathers in their Impenitency and Contumacy. And this he enforceth by an Argument taken from the dreadful event thereof, in the former part of this 5th *ver.* Your fathers, where are they? q. d. they are not, for they are ſaid not to be, who are departed out of the Land of the Living; and made free among the dead, *Jer.* 31. 15. *v.* q. d. Your fathers have been Conſumed and deſtroyed by fire, ſword and Peſti-

Peſtilence; they have been made dreadful examples of God's diſpleaſure againſt ſtubborn and impenitent ſinners; and their ruine ſhould be a warning to you, leaſt treading in their ſteps, ye ſhould undergo the ſame puniſhment with them. And ſays he in the words of my Text, the Prophets, do they live for ever? The ſcope and deſign of theſe words is (and according to the Judgment of expoſitors) to diſtinguiſh between the Perſons of the Prophets, and thoſe things which were in the name of God delivered by them. He here ſpeaks by way of Conceſſion, for this Interrogation carries a negation in it, and amounts to a Negative Propoſition q. d. the Prophets do not live for ever; But tho they dye, it may be, before their Predictions are

fulfilled, yet they ſhall certainly be Accompliſhed; as you may ſee, if you compare theſe words with the following verſe. But I ſhall no farther conſider the words relatively, with reſpect to the Context, but abſolutely in themſelves, as they are a negative Propoſition, wherein we may conſider, Firſt, the ſubject, the Prophets. Secondly, the Predicate, do not live for ever.

1. The ſubject, The Prophets, with reſpect unto which expoſitors are divided in their opinions.

1. Some hereby underſtand the falſe Prophets, who came when God did not ſend them, and delivered thoſe things in his name, which they never received from him. Who endeavoured to pleaſe, rather than to profit the People; ſowing Pillows

Pillows under their Elbows, and crying Peace, Peace, when deſtruction was haſtily marching towards them. But,

Secondly, With others I conceive we are hereby to underſtand the true Prophets, who received their miſſion from God, and acted according to that Commiſſion which he had given them. God at ſundry times and in Divers manners ſpake unto the Old Teſtament Church by the Prophets, *Heb.* 1. 1. *v.* He made great Revelations and diſcoveries of his mind and will unto them; which they, by virtue of their office, were obliged to declare unto the People. But under this title are comprehended, not only the extraordinary, but the ordinary Miniſters, both of the old and new Teſtament. Thus *Mat.* 10.

41. *He that receiveth a Prophet in the name of a Prophet, ſhall receive a Prophets reward, Luk.* 11. 49. *v.* Though the ordinary Miniſters of the new Teſtament, are not now to exerciſe that part of the Prophetical office, which conſiſted in the Prediction of Future events; yet there are other parts of this office, *viz.* More clearly to unfold and explain the mind and will of God contain'd in his word, to Reprove for ſin, and excite to duty; which appertain to them.

Secondly the Predicate, do not live for ever. There is a threefold life whereof we read in the holy Scripture, *viz.* A Temporal life, or a life of nature; a Spiritual life, or a life of Grace; and an Eternal life, or a life

life of Glory.

In the two *latter* ſences, *the faithful Prophets of God, ſhall live for ever.*

The life of grace which they are partakers of here, ſhall never be deſtroyed, but *will* terminate in a Life of *Glory*, and that *Life of Glory* which the Saints ſhall live above, *will* be of an *everlaſting* duration. But the Spirit of God in the words of my text ſpeaks of a *Temporal Life*, or a Life of nature, to which a Period muſt be put.

In this ſenſe, the Prophets do not live for ever. From the words thus explained, I ſhall preſent you with the *following obſervation.*

Doct. That they who minister about holy things, are not exempted from a *Temporal* Death.

Or, That ministers are *liable* to, and must undergo a *Temporal* Death. The Prophets, do they live for ever? *If they do not live for ever, they must certainly die.*

I need not Insist long upon the Proof of such an undeniable Proposition. Have not all God's Ministers, who lived in Preceeding ages, *fallen* by the stroke of Death? Is not *Moses* gone to the House appointed for *all living*, who is stiled the Prophet, by way of eminence. *Hosea* 12. 13. *Who was the Prince of the old Testament Prophets; an eminent type of the Great Apostle of our Profession, with Respect to his*

Prophe-

Prophetical Office, as appears from, Deut. 18, 18. Compared with Act. 3, 22. *What is become of that famous Prophet who came in the ſpirit and Power of* Elias, *who was the Morning Star that uſhered the Sun of Righteouſneſs into this World; did not he ſet in a Gloomy night of Death?* Where are the Apoſtles of our Lord, thoſe *Heraulds* that firſt Proclaimed the glad tidings of Peace, to the Rebellious world; are not they gone down to the dark and ſilent grave? Do not we frequently ſee the King of terrours hewing down thoſe who are Pillars in *Jehovah's* Temple, with his fatal Ax. In the farther Proſecution of this Point, I ſhall proceed in the enſuing method.

1. To ſhew you more particularly what that Death is, which they who Miniſter about

holy things are liable to, and must certainly undergo.

2. To assign some general Reasons, why they must die as well as other men.

3. To assign some particular and special Reasons of their death.

4. To give you some Account of the time when God usually *calls* them out of this world.

5. To make some Improvement and *Application* of the whole.

1. I shall shew you more *particularly*, what that Death is, which they who Minister about holy things are liable to, and must undergo. 1. Negatively. Neither they nor any of the Children of men are *liable* to, or *shall* undergo a *natural* death of the *Soul*. Though the *Souls* of wicked men are subject to a

Moral

Moral Death, which Conſiſts in a Privation of felicity and bleſſedneſs, yet they are not ſubject to a Phyſical Death, which Conſiſts in a Privation of Exiſtence, or Life; when men die, their *Souls* depart from their Bodies, they do not die, or ſleep with their Bodies. When their Bodies return to the Earth from whence they came, Their Souls return to that God as a Judge, from whom they came forth as a Creatour. Otherwiſe it would be in the Power of man to kill the *ſoul* as *well* as the Body, which our Saviour denies, *Math.* 10. 28. *Fear not them which can kill the Body, but cannot kill the Soul.* Death's fatal dart cannot pierce this Immortal Being. Death may break the Cabinets, but cannot touch that rich Jewel, which is Incloſed therein: It

diſſolves that earthly Tabernacle wherein the *Soul* reſides, but cannot deſtroy it's noble Inhabitant. The *Soul is a ſpiritual Immaterial*, and therefore an *Immortal Everliving* ſubſtance. If the *Soul* ſleeps with the Body, I know not how our Lord's Promiſe to the Penitent theif, *This day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe*, *Luk.* 23. 43. could be accompliſh't; nor what Reaſon can be aſſign'd for the *Apoſtle Paul's* deſire ſpeedily to depart out of the world, *Phil.* 1. 23.

I might produce many Arguments to eſtabliſh this aſſertion; But I cannot enter upon a large diſcouſſion of this controverſy at this time.

2. Affirmitively, There is a two fold death which they who Miniſter about holy things are

liable

liable to, and must undergo as *well* as other men, *viz.* A death of the man, and a death of the Body.

1. A death of the man: Which Consists in a separation of the *Soul* from the Body. As the union of the *Soul* with the Body is the Life of the man; So the separation of the *Soul* from the Body is the death of the man. When the Soul is Joyned to the Body we begin to live; when it is divorced from the Body, then, we die. Death's fatal stroke breaks in sunder the Ligament wherewith the *Soul* and Body are tyed together, and Rends these Intimate Companions from each others Embraces.

2. A death of the Body. This is inseparable from a death of the man; The *Soul* is the

Principle of the Bodies Life and Motion while it continues in it; and therefore when it takes it's flight from it, it ceases to be a *living* Creature, and becomes a *lifeless lump* of *clay*. This death of the Body consists in a Cessation of the *Circulation* of the Blood and Spirits, which are the *Animal Soul* of man. Thereby the Body is deprived of it's strength and vigour, of it's Motion and Activity, and of it's comelineſs and Beauty. Death makes a great alteration in this Curious structure. It tyes the most voluble tongue, fetters the most active and nimble hands and feet; It introduces *paleneſs* into the most ruddy face, and dimneſs into the most *sparkling* eyes.

2*dly*, I Proceed, to assign some general Reasons why Ministers must

must die as well as other men.

In general, because it is appointed for *all* men once to die, *Heb.* 9. 27. *This is a statute Law of Heaven, which never was, never will be repealed, but shall be fully executed.* The Law is *universal*, and therefore none can *plead* an exemption from the execution of it. They who give Laws to men are subject to this Appointment of God.

No Priveledges either *Temporal* or *Spiritual*, can give the Children of men a Protection from death's arrest. If it be objected, that some have past by, not through the Gates of death, for *Enoch* was Translated, and *Elias* mounted up to Heaven in a fiery Chariot; and they who remain alive upon Earth, at the coming of the Lord from Heaven, *shall* not sleep but be chang-

ed. It may be replyed, that, ſome Particular exceptions do not deſtroy a *general Rule*; beſides, the forementiond Perſons either did or *ſhall undergo* a change equivalent to a Death. But more Particularly, Miniſters muſt die as well as others.

1. Becauſe, they as well as others deſcended from the firſt *Adam*, by *whoſe tranſgreſſion* death was entailed upon *all* his natural off-ſpring and Poſterity. In this one man, *all* ſinned, and therefore death paſſed upon *all* men, *Rom.* 5. 12. *That apple which our firſt Parents ate in Paradiſe, hath brought a fatal ſurfeit upon all their Poſterity.* Tho the Godly are delivered from a *ſpiritual* and *eternal* death, yet they are *liable* to a *Temporal* death: Tho they are delivered from *Temporal* death, as a *Penal* evil;

evil; yet they are liable to it as a natural evil. Death is not the effect of nature, but the fruit of sin. Had man Persevered in his holiness, he *should* have continued in a state of *Immortality*. Sin opened the door to let death into the world; for death enter'd by sin, *Rom.* 5. 12. Yea, it is observable that the sentence of *Temporal* death pass't upon man, Immediately after a deliverance from *spiritual* and *eternal* death, by the seed of the Woman, was promised to him. And this sentence began Immediately to be executed, with respect to that necessity of Dying which man was brought under, and those Bodily distempers, the seeds of which were then Introduced to him.

2. That they may appear before the Judge of *all* the Earth

to

to give an *account of* the *Actions of* their Lives to him. That Judgment which *will* enſue upon death, is *one Reaſon of our Dying.* We muſt depart out of this Life, that we may appear before the Divine tribunal in the next Life. Miniſters are the ſubjects of the heavenly King, and *therefore* they muſt give an *account* to him as *well* as their hearers. We who declare and expound the Divine *Law to you*, and preſs you to yeild obedience to it, muſt be Judged by this *Law our ſelves*, and come under a ſtrict examination, with reſpect *to our obſervation of, and obedience* to it. We who perſwade *you* have, *or ought to* have, ſome *knowledge of* this part of the *Lords terrours*, even the future Judgment, as that which we are liable to our ſelves, *Cor.* 2. 5, 10, and 11.

3. I

3. I proceed to assign some special and particular Reasons why Ministers must die. And they will be such as have a peculiar reference to their station and employment.

1. They must die that they may give an account how they have discharged that office which they are called to, and that trust that is Reposed in them. Ministers are stewards of the manifold grace of God, and therefore must give an account of their stewardships. They have peculiar gifts bestowed upon them to fit and qualifie them for their work; therefore they must give an account how they have improved and laid them out in the service of that *Lord* from whom they received them. Ministers are Christ's *Embassadours*, whom he sends to deliver the

meſſage of *Life* and ſalvation unto Rebellious ſinners, and to treat with them about a *Reconciliation* to their offended *Soveraign*. They muſt therefore Return unto their *Lord*, to give an accouut how they, and their meſſage, were received and entertained in and by the world; how they have managed and behaved themſelves in the execution of their office, and what ſucceſs their *Embaſſy* hath had. They are *Labourers* ſent to work in the Church which is God's vineyard, and Husbandry, and therefore they muſt return to the maſter of the vineyard and the *Lord* of the harveſt; that they may give an account what work they have done therein. They are the ſhepherds, wherewith Chriſt the great ſhepherd of the ſheep hath intruſted *his* little flock;

flock; therefore *they must give an account what care they have taken of them.* They are *Gods Watchmen*, whom he appoints to *watch over Souls*, and therefore they must be accountable for 'em; *Heb.* 13. 17. *Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit your selves, for they watch for your souls as those that must give an account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief*; for that is *unprofitable* for you. Tho all men *have a great account to give*, yet Ministers have the greatest.

2. They must die, that they may be eased of those *burthens that lie upon them*, and delivered from *those Troubles and Afflictions which they are frequently exercised with in this life.* Indeed they are so many and great, that well might *the Apostle* say, 1 *Cor.* 15. 19. *If in this life only we have hope*

in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. We *Christians, of all men*; we *Ministers, of all Christians.* I shall mention some of them, that you may see what *cause* you have to pity and pray for your Ministers.

1. *The laboriousness of their Work. Know them who labour among you, and admonish you.* 1 *Thes.* 5. 12. they who labour in the Word and Doctrine, 1 *Tim.* 5. 17. οἱ κοπιῶντες, *who labour to weariness.* It is a work that is attended with much inward pleasure and delight, to those whose hearts are duly engaged in it; but yet much study and much preaching too, is a *weariness to the Flesh.* It is a labour that spends the Vitals, and consumes the Oil which should preserve the Lamp of Nature. It is such a *labour* as makes *Old Age* and *Youth* often meet together

gether. The *Jews* took Christ to be about 50 years Old, when he was little above 30, *Joh.* 8. 57. and some assign this reason for it, *that he had so enfeebled his body with his laborious exercises that he seemed older than he really was.* Other Callings are but Exercises to Nature; but the Ministers work debilitates Nature. The Minister, like *the Candle*, wastes while he shines. But at death he rests from his *labours.*

2. *The discouragements which they meet with in their work.*

1. *From themselves.* How often have *they aking hearts*, and *weeping eyes*, when they consider *the weight, importance* and *difficulty of their work*, and *their own insufficiency for it?* Says the *Apostle*, *Who is sufficient for these things?* 2 *Cor.* 2. 16. It is true, God hath promised to assist them; but

their *faith* is sometimes at a low ebb, as well as the *faith of others*. When *their faith is so unactive*, that they cannot with *this spiritual Eye* behold an Omnipotent Arm *stretcht forth for their support*, they are ready to sink under *their pressure*.

2. From others; Even those who are professed Friends to that work which they are engaged in.

How often are they reflected upon for *their fidelity in the discharge of their duty*?

How often are *Professors* ready to account *Ministers their Enemies*, because they tell them *the Truth*? How apt are they to fly in their Faces, if they do but *touch any of their Lusts with the Sword of the Spirit*? How often are they deserted by men for declaring *the whole Counsel of God*!

We have an instance of this in the great *Apostle of our profession*, because he preached a Doctrine which did not lie level with the carnal Reason of his Auditors. *Joh. 6. Many of his Disciples from that time went back, and walked no more with him*, 66. v. It is a great *discouragement to labour hard, and not to have our labour accepted.* It is true, we should look above *the dispraise of men, to the praise of God*; but *Ministers* are imperfect men, and therefore cannot always do so.

3. *Their unsuccessfulness in their work.* They have many times occasion to say with the Prophet, *Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed, Isa.* 53. 1. *We have spread out our hands all the day long unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way that was not good, af-*

ter their own thoughts, Isa. 65. 2. The Ministers work is set forth by *the pangs of a woman in travail*, Gal. 4. 19. And who can tell the Throws that their souls feel, who all the time of their Ministry, or a great part of it, *go in travail, and bring forth dead children at last?* It is a trouble to any man to take a great deal of pains, and not to have his Endeavours crowned with success. It must needs grieve these *Fishers of men*, to stand all the day long, and catch nothing. It cannot but trouble these *Husbandmen* to be continually sowing, and yet see no Harvest, or gathering in of Fruits: To preach themselves into their Graves, and yet not preach others to Christ, must needs be a great affliction. They seek not yours, but you, 2 Cor. 12. 14. They think not themselves suc-

ſucceſsful, if you give them a little *Wool from your backs*, unleſs ye become *Chriſt's Sheep*.

4. *The great oppoſition and perſecution which they meet with from the world.* To be a *Miniſter* (ſaid *Luther*) *is nothing elſe but to derive the world's wrath and fury upon himſelf.* The *He-Goats of the Flock* are moſt furiouſly aſſaulted by thoſe *Ravenous Woolves who ſeek its deſtruction*. The Leaders of the Chriſtian Army uſually bear the greateſt ſhock of the Enemies Rage. As the *Syrians* gave charge to fight *neither with great nor ſmall, but with the King of Iſrael only*; ſo ſometimes wicked men only bend their Forces againſt Chriſt's Miniſters.

The *children of darkneſs* take the greateſt pains to extinguiſh *the Lights of the world*. Perſecutors uſually thirſt moſt eagerly

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after *the blood of Prophets*. The Perſecution in *Acts* 12. begins with the murther of *James*. 7000 men could lie hid in *Jezabel*'s time better than *one Prophet*. Theſe are *the burthenſom ſtones* which almoſt every one is lifting at; in almoſt every National Storm they are taken up to be thrown over board, for thoſe that raiſed it. They are treated as thoſe who turn *the world upſide down*. Wicked men think, that if once the *Shepherd be removed, the Sheep will ſoon be ſcattered*; That if once the Leaders of *the Chriſtian Army* be taken off, *the Chriſtian Army will quickly be diſperſed*. God will not ſuffer his Servants to be always labouring, toiling, and mourning in Affliction and Diſtreſs; and therefore by *Death he delivers them therefrom*.

3. *Miniſters muſt die, that they may*

may receive the reward of their labours. It is true, Nothing that is done by us for God, deserves any thing at his hands. Could we perfectly answer *the Requirements of the Divine Law*, we must, when we have done all those things which are commanded us, say, we *are unprofitable servants*; for we have done no more than it was our Duty to do, *Luk.* 17. 10. But alas! how many flaws and defects are there in the best of our services? and what a vast disproportion is there between Gods Law and our Obedience, in their Latitude and Extent? But God is pleased, in a way of condescention, to give the Title of *a Reward* to that glory and felicity which he hath prepared and promised to his faithful servants, for their Encouragement in their Work. It is not a Reward of Debt, but

of

of Grace, according to that excellent distinction of the Apostle, *Rom* 4.4. Tho conscientious Ministers find a great Reward in their Work, yet their greatest reward is to be receiv'd when they have finisht it. There is a *Prophets reward*, which is greater than that of *a righteous man*, as appears from *Mat.* 10.41. Tho we shall not be rewarded for, yet we shall be rewarded according to our works. *What we sow that shall we also reap*, not only as to kind, but also with respect to degree. The more service any of us have done for God in this life, the greater will that recompence of Reward be which we shall receive from him in the next life. They that be wise, or they who by their instructions do instrumentally make others wise, (as the word properly signifies) *shall shine as*

the

the brightneſs of the Firmament; and they that turn many to righteouſneſs, as the Stars for ever and ever, Dan. 12. 3. Theſe Husbandmen who have laboured in God's Husbandry all the day long, muſt go to their Maſter at night, that they may receive their Penny.

The Apoſtle *Paul*, when the time of his Departure was at hand, expreſt his aſſurance, that *he was going to receive his Crown*, 2 *Tim.* 4. 6, 7, 8. I proceed now to

4*th General*. To give you ſome account of *the Time when God uſually calls his Miniſters out of this world*. In General, *When the time appointed for their continuance in this world is at an end, and the time appointed for their departure into another world is come*. There is an appointed time to man upon *earth*; for ſuch an Affirmation is implied in that Interrogation, *Job*

7. 1. We may well ſay of Miniſters in particular what *Job* affirms of Men in general, *Their days are determined, the number of their months are with God, he hath appointed their bounds, that they cannot paſs, Job* 14.5. But more particularly,

1. *When their work is done.* God hath allotted to every one of his ſervants ſome work to be done by him in this World, and till that is accompliſhed, he ſhall continue therein. Some Miniſters live longer than others, becauſe God hath appointed them more work than others. It is true, many Miniſters have been called off from *preaching work* long before their *diſſolution*, but they have had other, it may be, *ſuffering work* cut out for them: God ſends them to a Priſon, or confines them to their Chambers or Beds, by the *ſtrokes*

of his hand, that they may *glorifie him, and convince, inſtruct and ſtrengthen others by their Chriſtian fortitude and exemplary patience.* That Reverend Miniſter, whoſe *Deceaſe* occaſion'd this Diſcourſe, had a *great deal of work to do for God in his declining Age*, which is evident from the many *Seals which God gave to his Miniſtry, even towards the cloſe of it.* When he had, as it were, *one foot in the Grave*, he was *Inſtrumental* to the *Reſurrection of many Dead Souls to a Spiritual Life.* God put an end to his *Miniſterial Work* but a very little time before he *call'd him to receive his Crown*, which was a ſingular favour granted to this *Venerable Old Man.*

2. When their Meſſage is generally ſlighted and rejected. If they to whom an Embaſſadour

is sent, by an *earthly Prince*, will not give him *Audience*, or refuse to comply with those *Proposals* which he makes in his *Master's Name*; it is time for *his Lord to recal him*. God will not always suffer his *Ministers*, who are his *Embassadours*, to make *Offers* and *Tenders of Salvation to poor sinners*, and intreat them to be *reconciled to him* in vain and to *no purpose*. When Men *rebelliously* stop their Ears against his *Gospel-Calls*, and slights those *compassionate Invitations* which he gives them by his *Prophets*; he *calls them home unto himself*.

3. When *desolating Judgments* are hastily *advancing towards* and make a near *approach* unto the *places wherein they live*. *Noah*, that famous *Preacher of righteousness*, enter'd into the *Ark* but a

few

few days before the old World was destroyed by the Deluge. God frequently calls his *Servants* into *the Chambers of Death, when an overflowing scourge is coming.* The setting of these *Lights in the World* portends a *gloomy night.* These *Righteous Men* are often *taken away from the Evil to come,* tho few observe and lay it to heart.

4. I shall now make some improvement and Application of the whole. And that,

1. *By way of Information.*
2. *By way of Exhortation.*
3. *By way of Consolation.*

1. *By way of Information.* 1. Are the Ministers of Christ *mortal men?* then this may inform us, what cause we have to admire the *goodness of God* intreating with us by them. Should the great *Jehovah* treat with us im-

mediately, we ſhould be forc'd to ſay with the *Iſraelites*, *Let not God ſpeak with us, leaſt we die*, Exod. 20. 19. Nor could we in our mortal ſtate bear to converſe with thoſe *glorious Angels*, who continually behold his *face*, and ſtand *before his Auguſt Throne*; but God, in compaſſion to our weakneſs, treats with us by men like our ſelves; ſuch, who tho they are in God's ſtead, are alſo form'd out of the Clay, *whoſe terrour ſhall not make us afraid, neither ſhall their hand be heavy upon us*, as *Elihu* ſays to *Job*, 33. 6. 7. who can, from the *acquaintance* they have, will their own hearts tell us the *baſeneſs* of ours, and with whom we may *converſe* with the greateſt familiarity.

2. Are Miniſters *mortal men*? This may inform us that we ought not to Idolize them; hon-

our

our, and respect them we must, but Idolize them we must not, tho they are men highly dignified by God, yet they are *mortal men still*, tho they are *sent to proclaim the Promise of Everlasting Life*, yet they are liable to a *temporal Death*. Tho the rich treasures of *Spiritual Gifts* and *Graces are powerd into these Vessels*, yet they are but *earthen ones*, *and will soon be broken by the blow of God's hand*; tho these *guards are very delightful to us*, and we find great *refreshment in sitting under their shadow*, yet the *worm of Death* will soon make them to wither.

3. *Must Ministers Die, and give an Account of their Ministry unto God?* Then how diligent and laborious should they be therein. Surely they should endeavour to bring as much *Glo-*

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ry to the reverend and holy Name of God, and to do as much good to the *precious Souls of Men*, as they can, while they Live, for when they Die, they can do no more; when Death hath seised upon them, they can no more *proclaim the glad Tidings of Peace to the rebellious World*; they can no more *inform the Ignorant, quicken the Slothful, convince Gain-sayers, perswade the Disobedient, strengthen the Weak, or comfort the Disconsolate*. Moreover, they should be excited to Diligence in their Work, by that awful Account which they must give e're long to their Lord. Will a prudent Servant loyter in the day time, who knows that his Master will take an account of his Work at night? Oh! how little do some who enter on the *work of the Ministry* consider that dread-

dreadful Account that they have to give unto *the Judg of all the Earth, when they depart out of this World.* Miniſters muſt be accountable for thoſe *Souls which are loſt by their unfaithfulneſs and negligence*, as appears from *Ezek.* 33. 6. And therefore the Apoſtle *Paul* charges *Timothy to be diligent in his Work, as he would anſwer it unto the Judg both of quick and dead, at his appearance and his Kingdom*, 2 Tim. 4. 1, 2.

4. *Muſt the Miniſters of the Goſpel die, and give an Account of their Miniſtry?* Then how unreaſonable is it for the People to be offended with them for their *faithfulneſs* and *Eagerneſs in the diſcharge of it.* It may be you are ready to think them too ſharp in reproving Sin, too earneſt in preſſing duty, and too ſevere in urging the threatnings of the

Divine Law, but consider, they do it for their own sakes, as well as for yours, that if they cannot *deliver your Souls*, yet they may *deliver their own.*

5. *Must the Minister of the Gospel Dye, that they may rest from their labours, be eased of their Troubles, and receive their reward?* Then it is a great peice of self-denial in a Minister that is satisfied in his fitness for Death to be willing to Live. We have an instance of this in the Apostle *Paul*, who, tho upon his own Account, *he desired to depart, and to be with Christ, yet for the sake of the Church, he was willing to abide longer in the flesh*, 1 Phil. 23.24.

2. *By way of Exhortation*, Have a care that you do not hasten the Death of your Ministers. It is true their days are deter-

termined by that God, in whose hand all our Times are; but you may be *instrumental to shorten their Lives*, and that not only *by putting them to death, as wicked persecutors have often done, but by other means.*

1. By *over valuing of them.* If you give that honour to them, which belongs only to the *Lord of the Prophets*, you will provoke him *to take them away from you*: if ye fall down and Worship these *bright and glittering Stars*, no wonder, if the *Father of lights remove them from your sight.* If you advance them to *God's Throne*, he will quickly *lay them in the dust.*

2. By undervaluing them, by slighting and contemning their Persons, their Gifts, or their Message. If you do not prize your Mercies when you Enjoy them,

God

God will make you to know the worth of them in the want of them, if you deſpiſe God's Ambaſſadors, it is time for him to recal them. Moreover, here by you will wound their *Souls* and break their *Hearts*; and why will you *bring their heads with ſorrow to the grave*, who have ſo great a regard to your welfare.

2. Look upon your Living Miniſters as dying men: and that to theſe two ends and purpoſes.

1. That you may moderate your Affections towards them. The conſideration of the vanity and frailty of all created objects ſhould wean our Hearts and Affections from them, and this conſideration ſhould have the ſame influence upon us with reſpect to Goſpel Miniſters. Why ſhould

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we set our eyes, our hearts upon those who are not: for they will soon take to themselves wings, and fly away from us into *an invisible world*.

Secondly, that you may make the utmost *improvement* of them while they continue with you, *endeavour* to get as much good as you can from them *while* they live; for when they are once *entered* into the *gloomy shades of Death*, they can be no farther *beneficial* to you; they shall no more entreat you, *caution*, or *warn you*, Counsel and *admonish* you, *comfort* and *encourage you*, then they shall no more pray for or with you; as death stops the ear of the *hearer*, so it ties the *tongue* of the preacher. Oh sinners! Speedily accept of

those offers of salvation which they make to you in their masters name, for you know not how *soon* their feet who bring these glad tidings may go *down* to the grave; it may be, when they are taken away from you; you will lament and bewail *your misimprovement* of 'em; 'tis rare that we prize what we have, till we have it not; and we seldom know the worth of a mercy, till we experience the want of it.

Furthermore, consider that as your Ministers must appear before the Divine Bar, to give an account of their Ministry; so you must appear there to give an account of your attendance on it; if you reject their Messages, they will come in as *evi-*

dences

dances against you in the *Day of Judgment*, says the Apostle, *Do ye not know that the Saints shall judge the World?* 1 Cor. 6. 2. and Ministers shall with other *Saints judge the World*, not only *Communicatively* and *Participatively* in *Christ* their *mystical Head*, and *approbatively* with respect unto that Assent which they shall give unto *Christ's Sentence*, but also *testificatively*, by becoming Witnesses against them. How dreadful a thing will it be for those very *Ministers who now plead with God for you*, and with you for your own Souls, to become Advocates for the *Law* and *Justice* of *God* against you? what horror will seise upon you? how inexcusable will you be left, when they shall say, *Lord, these are the Men upon*

whom we spent our time and our strength, whom we taught and admonished in season and out of season; for the Salvation of whose Souls we destroyed our own Bodies; we Preached to them with the greatest seriousness, and perswaded them with the greatest importunity, as if our own Salvation had depended upon the working out of theirs; we were as Boanerges, Sons of Thunder, proclaiming to them the Terrors of a Fiery Law; and like Barnabas, Sons of Consolation, declareing to them the blessings of the everlasting Gospel; we set before them Life and Death, Blessing and Curseing, but they were like the deaf Adder, which stops her Ears at the Voice of the Charmer, charm he never so wisely. Therefore, O Lord! we acknowledg they de-

deserve the heaviest strokes of Vindictive Justice.

Thirdly, When God hath taken away any of his Faithful Ministers, be not insensible of the stroke; tho we must not murmur at it, yet we ought to Mourn for it. Shall not we lie in the dust, when the Crown is fallen from our heads? shall the Lights of the World be removed, and we put no Sack cloath on our Loyns? Let us consider whether our sins have not occasion'd the removal of Gods Prophets; and if they have, let us speedily repent of them, and turn from them, least we provoke God farther to stretch out his hand, and take more Labourers out of his vineyard.

If one Affliction do's not reform us, we must expect another will quickly tread upon its heels.

Fourthly, When God hath taken away any of your Ministers, endeavour to recollect and retain those *excellent truths which were delivered by them*, while they went in and out before you. Let me perswade you who attend *upon this Lecture*, to call to mind those *blessed Truths which that faithful Servant of God*, who once spake to you *in the Name of the Lord* (but is now enter'd *into the place of silence*) delivered to you therein; and endeavour to *reduce them unto practise*. Tho he is Dead, *the word of the Lord Lives and abides for ever*. Those *Counsels*

which

which he gave you from the word of God, do oblige you, *tho he is bound with the chains of Death.*

Fifthly, When your Miniſters are taken away by Death, *conſider what things were commendable in them, and endeavour an Imitation of them therein.* It is true, the *beſt of them had their failings and imperfections*: *Moſes* and *Elias* were men ſubject to the *like paſſions as we are*; the moſt *Eminent Saints* are to be followed by us, no farther than they followed *Chriſt*; but when they are gone, all their *failings ſhould be buried with them*, and their *Excellencies* ſhould be kept *alive in our Memory*, in order *to our imitation of them*; and indeed there

were several things of this nature *observable in this Reverend Old Man.*

1. His accurate and circumspect walking. I do not say, that he was wholly free from sin, (unless perfection is unattainable in a mortal state) but yet he was one who carefully endeavour'd to avoid it. He, with the Apostle, *Paul did herein exercise himself, to have always a conscience void of Offence, towards God and towards men.*

He walked with that caution, that his greatest Enemies had nothing against him, save only in the matters of his God; That holy Life which he lived, did command Reverence even from those who were Enemies to the holy

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Doctrine which he preached. He was a *Preacher out of the Pulpit as well as in it.* Not like those who press the Form of godliness on *a Lord's Day, and openly deny the power of it the remainder of the week;* who *pluck down that in their Conversations which they build up in their Pulpits.*

2. His *universal love to Christians.* He had a great respect to *Christ's New Commandment which he gave to his Disciples, to love one another.* He *loved the Image of God wheresoever he saw it.* He was not a man of a narrow and private, but of *a large and publick spirit.* The *difference of his fellow Christians Opinions from his did not alienate his affections from them.* He *lov'd all his fellow Travellers, tho they did not walk*

in the same particular path with himself. He embrac'd those in the Arms of his Love upon *Earth*, with whom he thought he should joyn in *singing the Song of the Lamb in Heaven.* It would be well if not *only private Christians, but also Ministers did imitate him therein:* there would not then be that sourness of spirit which is too often (with grief be it spoken) found among them.

3. His meekness and humility. He was not of a *proud and lofty Temper*, but *like that Master whom he profess'd to serve, meek and lowly.* He was willing to bear with and forbear others. To stoop and condescend to others, and to pass by those injuries which he received from them.

4.

4. *His laboriousness in that work which he was engaged in.* He was not *a loyterer*, but *a labourer*. He was *willing to spend and to be spent in the service of his Lord, and for the good of poor souls.* It is true, Old Age and Youth did as it were meet in him: God had bless'd him with an extraordinary measure of *bodily strength*; and he was not *an unfaithful Steward of this Talent wherewith God had entrusted him*; yea, *when his flesh and his heart seemed to fail*; when his flesh was *so weak that he could hardly bear to stand in a Pulpit*, and *his Voice so low that he could scarcely be heard, his affections were so much engaged in his work* that he was *very unwilling to leave it.*

5. *His courageous and chearful suf-*

suffering for his Masters and the Gospels sake. He chearfully went about suffering as well as preaching work. He *was not unwilling to take up his cross and follow his Lord and Master in the Thorny Road of Tribulation.*

In these things let us imitate and *follow the Example of this holy man, who I question not is gone to the Assembly of the first born, to that glorious Company of Prophets, who having finished their work on Earth, are wearing their Crowns in Heaven.*

6. *When Ministers are taken away, beg of God to raise up others in their stead.* When God calls any Labourers out of his Vineyard, earnestly cry to the Lord of the Harvest, that he would

would thrust out more Labourers into it.

That there may be a ſucceſſion of Miniſters, who may rightly divide the Word, and faithfully break the Bread of Life to you, and to your Poſterity, when your places ſhall know you no more.

Thirdly, By way of *Conſolation* to the *Saints*.

Firſt, *With reſpect to their own Death.* It may be you are ready to go all your life-time in Bondage for *fear of Death*; the thoughts of *your Diſſolution are troubleſome to you*; but conſider that you go the ſame way that the moſt Eminent Servants of God,

who have been, and are in the higheſt Place and Office in the Church, either have gone, or muſt go: You are going to the *Glorious Society of God's Prophets*, who are *made Perfect in Holineſs and in Happineſs*. Death will Tranſlate you from the Militant Church upon Earth, to the Church Triumphant in Heaven.

Secondly, With reſpect to the Death of your Miniſters. It is an *Affliction*, but yet it admits of *Conſolation*; and that upon theſe three following Accounts.

Firſt, Tho it be your Loſs, yet it is their gain! *For me to live is Chriſt, and to die is*

gain

gain, ſays the great Miniſter of the Uncircumciſion, 1. *Phil.* 21. They are only gone to exchange *mortality*, for a *glorious Immortality*, a *heavy Croſs*, for a *ponderous* and *never fading Crown*, a *Pulpit* wherein they Laboured for Chriſt; for a Triumphant Throne whereon they ſhall Eternally Reign with him Could they who are Rejoycing above, ſpeak to you who are Mourning below, they would ſay to you, as our Lord did unto the Women who followed him to the Croſs, *Luke* 23. 28. *Weep not for me, but for your ſelves.* Weep not for us, who are come to our Journeys end, but weep for your ſelves, who are ſtill Travelling thro'

a waſt and howling Wilderneſs. Weep not for us who reſt from our Labours; but weep for your ſelves, who are ſtill *Labouring and Toyling*. Weep not for us who are ſafely Arrived at the Haven of Reſt, and the Port of Bleſſedneſs; but weep for your ſelves, who are toſt to and fro upon a Tempeſtuous Sea. Weep not for us, who ſtand upon a Mount of Triumph, and have obtained a Compleat Victory over All Our Enemies; but weep for your ſelves, who are ſtill in a Field of War, Wreſtling not only with *Fleſh and Blood, but with Principalities and Powers.*

Se-

Secondly, God can ſupply their Places, and make up your Loſs, by Raiſing up others.

When *Moſes* Dyed, the Lord ſent *Joſhuah* to *Lead Iſrael* into the *Land* of *Canaan*. Is *Elijah* gone to Heaven? The Reſidue of the Spirit is with God; and he can cauſe a Double Portion of it to reſt upon *Eliſha*.

When God hath Work to do, he will never want Inſtruments: He can perfect Praiſe out of the Mouths of Babes and Sucklings; and make even a perſecuting *Saul* to become a preaching *Paul*.

Third-

Thirdly, E're long you ſhall meet them never more to be ſeparated from them. 'Twill be but a few Days e're you ſhall enjoy their Society in a more Glorious Place than this.

Oh! What Greetings will there be between you and your Faithful Miniſters, when you are entered into the Joy of your Lord! Then ſhall you who Worſhipped God together with them, upon Earth, Joyn with them in a Triumphant Song of Praiſe, *to him that ſits upon the Throne and to the Lamb for evermore, in Heaven.* Ye ſhall then ſee the Great Prophet, our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, ſit-

ſitting upon a Majeſtick Throne, and all the other Prophets, like ſo many bright Stars, compaſſing about this Son of Righteouſneſs for ever and ever.

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AN

HYMN

Compoſed and ſung on the ſame Occaſion.

ALL Adam's *Children once muſt die,*
Deaths fatal ſtroke will ſever
Their bodies from their ſouls ſurely;
Prophets don't live for ever.

Theſe bright illuſtrious Stars muſt fall
into a bed of duſt.
God will his Meſſengers re-call,
tho Prophets die they muſt.

Then ſhall they enter into Reſt
who here have labour'd hard.
They muſt die, that they may be bleſt
with a prophets reward.

Our sins do oft times God provoke,
to take these Lights away.
When prophets do fall by deaths
stroke,
expect a gloomy day.

Oh Lord! us unto Canaan *bring,*
that with thy prophets we
May Joyful hallelujahs *sing*
unto Eternity.

FINIS.

ERRATA.

PAge 9, line 12, dele *and*, p. 33, l. 21, r. *the*, p. 40, l. 13. f. *ſtopt*, r. *ſtop*, l. 15, f. *ſlights*, r. *ſlights*.

Several ſmall miſtakes the reader is deſired to correct with his Pen.